

Mourning in Equals

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Summary: Hiccup isn't the only one who's mourning on Mother's Day.

Mourning in Equals

****A/N: LOTS of feels in this story! Songs like "When You're Gone" and "A Thousand Years" are strongly recommended while reading!****

* * *

><p>Today is Mother's Day.<p>

For Berkians, who live mainly in the cold and thus must stay together to keep warm, this is a huge issue. It is the day when ceasefires occur, people stay shut in their houses for once, and mothers care given excessively high treatment and value.

Even when the dragons still preyed on the Berkian livestock, the villagers would still do their best to show their mothers love before leaving to fight off the so-called beasts. But now, with the dragons on their side, Berk can now have a peaceful Mother's Day once again.

Still, Mother's Day is still different for everyone.

To Snotlout, it means another day of listening her mother scold him, despite his best attempts to behave on that special day. Though the family are never together, they are never quite apart, either. The two usually share the fire by night, and after lots of hesitation, the Snotlout gives his beloved mother a hug at some point. Even Snotlout has a good side, but it is a side that he only shows when he loves the most.

To Fishlegs, it just means any other day- he already loves his mother very much, and his mother loves him back equally in return. He will

simply make a larger gift for his mother, and will get one more kiss on the cheek back. Of course, there might be a bit too much love in there, given Fishleg's evident cowardice despite his desires of reading that the other villagers lack, but between them, it is the love that counts.

To Astrid, it means very reluctantly staying at home, away from her friends, and being shut up in her room all day. The mother and daughter do not talk at all, like any other day, and a special day like this makes absolutely zero difference to Astrid. She will throw her knives in her room even more than she usually does- a symbol of how distant two can be when they are forced to stay together. Not one day have they properly talked even since Astrid grew.

To the twins, it is a very important day. It is the day that they show a side of theirs that they normally never show; care. After some elaborated midnight plans, they will sneak off to make their surprise by night. When their mother wakes up, she will find the twins sleeping on the floor, splayed out from all the exhaustion, and will also see breakfast prepared- just for her- lying on the table along with gifts, cards, and even her children's helmets. Vikings use these helmets as a sign of defiance and courage, and only when they are closest do they lay down their signs of metaphor and truly be close to each other.

To Hiccup, though, it means the day that he visits his mother's grave.

Today, Hiccup wakes up late into the day, concerned only by the fact that today is today, and that Toothless did not bother to wake him up like usual. In fact, Toothless seems to be very fidgety when the boy gets up, puzzling Hiccup even further.

"Is there something wrong?" he asks, reaching a hand out to pat Toothless's snout. The dragon gives a sad murmur in response, not quite answering his question. So Hiccup comes up with one of his own.

"Oh. Yeah. Mother's day..." he says quietly. He had been dreading this day, wanting it to never come, but like all things in the world, it did, eventually.

To his surprise, Toothless droops to the floor sadly. It is the first time that he has done this without Hiccup knowing why- and it's not as if Hiccup's mother concerns Toothless that much. Even Hiccup had admitted himself, a few weeks before, that her mother had left them to Valhalla when he was very young. Toothless thought that Hiccup's mother was very selfish, to leave him for a place without even telling Hiccup.

If Toothless still found Hiccup's mother selfish, though, he's not showing it.

Hiccup sits down and times his soft breathing to match the sad dragon next to him, a silent gesture that he understands his pain- or, at least, wants to understand his pain.

It is far better to not know what is know, but still care, than to know what's wrong and not give a damn at all. Especially when you are that friend that he needs the most.

Toothless looks at Hiccup intently, also trying to understand the human's motives. He sits up, folding his wings together, allowing Hiccup to lean onto Toothless for comfort. Do you care about my pain? is what those green eyes ask, and the Viking's answer has never been clearer than ever.

Yes.

After several silent minutes, Hiccup gets up. He realizes that he will, yet again, have to return to the village's graveyard and openly cry in front of her grave. Cry for the loving woman who never got to say goodbye. Cry for the dead body that now lies in the ground, never feeling anything below or above the dirt that slowly consumes her lifeless body.

All of these truths Hiccup finds hard to cope up with.

Eventually, he gets up wordlessly, Toothless being quick to follow.

As he makes his way down the stairs, he finds his father quietly eating his breakfast, another dish on the opposite side of the table that he knows Hiccup will never eat. It is a sad day for the leader, and he will try to work as hard as possible to forget about his pain of losing his beloved wife. On the other hand, Gobber has closed the smithy for a day so Hiccup can not work- this means that there will be less accidents in the forge, especially with Hiccup not crying and dropping things even more than he usually does. The Viking claims that he "used to have a mother too", which is not incorrect, but even Toothless knows better.

"Morning, Dad," Hiccup calls from the stairs. Stoick looks at him attentively and gives him a nod.

"Going there again?" he asks from the table. He does not even tell Hiccup to eat. He knows his son far beyond that.

"Yes, dad," the son answers. In a way, Stoick would like to go to the cemetery as well- but even Vikings have their fears. The dead body that was once loved was one of them.

It goes to show that even the hiccup of the town could be stronger than the chief.

"Be safe. Keep that dragon with you," his father says, almost compelling. As the leader of Berk, he must not be troubled by his son's own problems, even if they made him uneasy.

Hiccup nods and exits the door, Toothless following silently like a shadow. He's always been like this, especially after Hiccup lost his leg, and it's not because Hiccup likes to steal fish for him to eat. The two are share a strong bond that keeps them together in the worst of times.

And it is one of these times that Hiccup needs a friend the most, when he fears and pains so much.

Halfway to the cemetery, Hiccup glances back at Toothless to see why the dragon is so quiet.

"Am I bothering you with my silence?" he asks, guilt showing very clearly on his face, even if he does not know what is making Toothless so nonverbal at the moment.

The Night Fury shakes his head fervently and give Hiccup an innocent look. Still, he does not hide the very, very clear sadness that he shows through his actions and posture. His ears are drooped, his eyes wide and watery, his legs slouching as he purposely drags them along the ground.

"What's bothering you, then? You could lead the way..." Hiccup's offer of help is silenced when Toothless pushes him towards the cemetery. Confused, but touched, Hiccup and the dragon continue their lengthy walk towards the site of the dead.

It is a powerful bond, friendship. It is why Hiccup often gives up his personal needs for Toothless, and why Toothless often tries to do the same. This time is no different. Despite Hiccup's strong love for his deceased mother, he cannot help but go out of his way to satisfy Toothless first- to which the latter knows, and counters by nudging him to get his pains solved first. Their shared loyalty, care, and altruism is a wonder to many in the village. To the pair, though, it is normal.

It is only matched by the unconditional love that Hiccup has for his mother.

They reach the cemetery after a several more tense minutes of walking. Though Toothless has never been here, he could understand the permanent sadness that loomed over this place, the place where silent slabs of stones were placed into the silent ground with silent Viking helmets as a sign of who their owner once was. All silent. No talking. No livelihood.

Some graves are empty, but still contain a gravestone for them. A grave has only been recently made- possibly for one of the village's older men.

It takes Hiccup several croons from Toothless this time to get him moving.

"Alright..." Hiccup says half-heartedly. He has been dreading this moment ever since they stepped into the death grounds.

They trudge onward towards his mother's grave, past several tombstones and their bodies below. Do these bodies know that they are being disgraced by being walked upon, despite being honored so highly in life?

It does not matter, Toothless thinks. Dead people have no feelings..

Hiccup reaches into his travelling bag and produces a blue lilac from its interiors.

"How you got this for me was a wonder," Hiccup thinks out loud. "These only grow in the deepest parts of the forest."

Toothless can only whimper quietly. He is more concerned about other

things.

Hiccup walks over to his mother's grave, the flower threatening to fall from his shaking hands as he quietly kneels down and dusts away at the tombstone. Toothless looks at him with apparent interest.

__Why __would __you __care __for __a __slab __of __stone__? __He thinks. __Even __if __there __is __someone __you __love __own __there__? __The __soil __has __claimed __them __already__. __They __do __not __know __that __their __grave __is __being __cleaned__. __They __do __not __**care **__that __their __graves __are __being __cleaned__..

__Because __they __are __dead__. __And __the __dead __don__'__t __feel __like __us __do__. __They __don__'__t __feel __at __all__..

Hiccup is crying. Toothless senses his pain, but can only do so much to help by standing next to him, providing what little comfort he can with his warm, scaly body.

"Mom..." Hiccup moans, crying and letting his tears fall to the soil, the soil that is decaying his mother's body. The water will help the process, in any case.

"I wish you were here..." Hiccup says quietly, the lilac finally slipping and falling perfectly in front of his mother's viking helmet- her remaining physical sign of existence.

When people die, people keep photographs of them. They set ceremonies to mourn the dead, and ask why they must leave them so. But like all physical things, even these memoirs will soon one day fade away into the soil too.

It is what they have done in their lifetime that shines the brightest when they die, for it is kept into the memories of their loved ones, and can never be replaced or added to. It is the love and fun that they had in life that people truly appreciate, not the soulless items that only represent them. They can only wish that they are loved like this when day die.

Hiccup has his hands on the ground, struggling to not fall to the soil. He wants his mother to be here, to caress him, to hug him, to tell him "I love you" one more time. He wants to smell the scent of morning wind and winter snow that his father so accurately describes, even though he has only smelled it once before in his life, in his extreme adolescence.

And he will never feel that same scent again.

"Mom..."

Hiccup's hands finally lose the will to keep going. He wants to join his mother, to be with her eternally, to feel her mother's care for life. He wants nothing else but his mother and her love.

His fall is interrupted as Toothless's head intercepts his body, rumbling a bit at the immediate turn of events. Hiccup looks at him with teary eyes, thankful that he is brought back to his senses. He looks at the ground, then at the tombstone, then at Toothless's

caring eyes. He must stay alive for Toothless. It would be selfish of him to leave alone without caring about him at all. He feels guilty that he ever considered that possibility, even for a single moment forgot that Toothless still needed him, like he still needed Toothless.

For it is the love of Toothless that allows him to mourn the dead so strongly without joining them himself. To use their guidelines as an example to continue in life. To know that the dead would be happy to know that their beloved too lived a happy life, as they once did.

"I can't join you yet," Hiccup says decisively after some time, hovering there with Toothless's head as support. "But someday, I will, mom. Wait for me." He gets up, giving Toothless a big hug. Toothless only looks at him with wide eyes.

With Toothless by his side, he turns around and walks away, not looking back, leaving the blue lilac on the soil where he left it.

Toothless croons sadly, and his sadness still lingers with him long after Hiccup has satisfied his need to show respect to his mother. To him, no mother would ever compare to his.

Hiccup stops, once again noticing his best friend's disturbance.

"Seriously, Toothless... tell me what's wrong." His eyes are full of concern, yet, like in the cemetery, they do little to help the pained.

Toothless gives Hiccup an Are you sure? look, to which the human nods. Toothless croons.

Thank you, the green eyes tell Hiccup, but his mind is somewhere else. Let's... go.

The dragon then walks past Hiccup, heading towards an even more isolated part of the isle. Hiccup is quick to match his friend's slow and sad pace, even with his prosthetic impeding his process.

Hiccup realizes, as he is walking with his soul mate, where they are going.

The cliff.

"Why the cliff? Does Toothless want to fly?" Hiccup thinks quietly. It is times like this that knowing the problem would make the solving much easier than just caring.

Toothless shows no sign of wanting to fly, at any rate- he looks more like he wants to fall.

At the cliff's edge, Toothless looks to Hiccup's bag, where a codfish is carefully put inside. Hiccup always brings fish like this whenever he is outside, mainly to entertain Toothless and make sure that he's never hungry. His friend's suffering and his own are always shared.

Hiccup produces the fish, still not understanding. "You hungry?" he

asks.

Toothless shakes his head, but Hiccup hands fish to him anyway. "I wish you could talk," he mumbles. Toothless croons in agreement.

Then, the Night Fury walks to the edge of the cliff; alone. Hiccup sees him dangerously close to the edge, and rushes forth next to him, in case anything crazy is going to happen.

"_No_,_" Hiccup thinks alarmingly. "_Toothless __is __just __sad__. __He_'__s __not __going __to__..._"

True to his assumption, Toothless, with the fish in his fangless mouth, only stands at the cliff's edge, staring into the distance, letting the wind ripple his ears, grazing his now watery eyes.

Hiccup knows better than to talk at this moment. Even his friend needs personal moments sometimes. He stands close by, but does not touch him, fearing that he may ruin the moment.

After a minute or so, Toothless lets a single tear fall to the ground beside Hiccup, who is quick to take note of something new: dragons _do_ cry. Dragons _do_ know what pain and sadness is.

Dragons, in a way, are just like humans. They are sentimental and prone to emotions.

They are so draconic, but yet so humane.

Toothless drops the fish over the cliff. He watches it as it falls into the water below, from its descent to the water claiming the fish's lifeless body. He shoots a firebolt into the sky, which, to Hiccup's ultimate understanding, is a sign of respect.

To his friend's dead mother.

"_Toothless__... __I __never __knew__..._" Hiccup thinks.

Toothless lets out a roar of pain, tears falling in a steady stream as he backs away from the cliff and slumps onto the ground. He closes his eyes, fearing that he may too one day follow his mother into that eternal sky. He wants to feel his mother's soft heartbeat once again.

Instead, he feels Hiccup's soft hand patting his sides, causing Toothless to cry even more.

_Hiccup__..._ the black dragon thinks. _Thank __you__. For being here with me._

Hiccup is now crying too, his head resting on Toothless's side, unable to take in the events before him. He feels guilty to not realize beforehand that his friend too had a mother.

A mother who loved her son so much that her death is mourned so deeply.

A mother who brought a dragon to the world, who allowed him to leave

his nest to fend for himself.

A mother who made his meeting with Hiccup- or anything else, as a matter of fact- possible.

It was his mother that had raised him, looked after him, taught him in those early years.

It was his mother that loved him.

And, finally, Hiccup truly feels Toothless's pain.

After a few hours of silence and crying, Toothless ends his mourning. He turns around and sees Hiccup, passed out next to him, eyes red and wet because of someone he does not even know. He picks up Hiccup by the tunic, hoisting him into the air and gently setting him down onto his back.

__You__'__re __safe __with __me__, __Hiccup__,_ he thinks.

He trudges through the forest quickly but steadily, as to not wake up Hiccup from his slumber. Once he reaches the house, he finds Stoick with a note on the table.

Toothless reaches his head over to read the message properly.

__Going __to __the __cemetery __to __see __your __mother__. __Love __you__. -__Dad__

Toothless withdraws his head and heads upstairs, using his wings to steady Hiccup as they ascend the uneven floors.

In their room, Toothless sets Hiccup onto the bed. It will be sometime before he wakes up again.

And, of course, it will be Toothless who will be by his side as he does so.

__Thank __you __for __making __my __life __worth __living__,_ he thinks, standing patiently at the bed's side.

As Hiccup sleeps, he thinks of the same thing.

* * *

><p>Today is Mother's Day in my country, so I decided to dedicate this fic to the occasion (and you folks, of course). I enjoyed writing this a lot, even though the story itself may be pretty bad by my standards.<p>

End
file.